

REMARKS

Careful consideration has been given by the applicants to the Examiner's comments and rejection of the claims, as set forth in the outstanding Office Action, and favorable reconsideration and allowance of the application, as amended, is earnestly solicited.

Applicants note the Examiner's rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as detailed in the Office Action, wherein Claims 1-13 are deemed to be indefinite on the basis of various formal aspects.

Accordingly, in order to clearly and unambiguously provide appropriate terminology, applicants have amended the claims to eliminate undue alternative terminologies, including the terms "such as" or the term "or". In this connection, the definition of the gas-discharge lamp, as comprising a fluorescent lamp, has been incorporated into separate dependent claims, thereby fully meeting the Examiner's objections in that regard. Furthermore, applicants have also employed the term "selectively", which is in conformance with the U.S. practice in being directed to defining alternative aspects in a single claim. Accordingly, this amendment to the claims is deemed to fully meet the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph.

Applicants further note the rejection of Claims 1, 3, 11 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b), as being anticipated by Mashburn, III, et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,962,984, as discussed in the Office Action.

With regard to the foregoing, applicants also note the rejections of Claims 1-5, 7 and 9-13 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b), as being allegedly anticipated by Osterried, et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,770,924.

Accordingly, in order to clearly and unambiguously distinguish over the art, irrespective as to whether the latter is considered singly or in combination, applicants have amended the claims to provide the particular functional or method and structural limitations, which are deemed to define the inventive concept in a precise and clear manner.

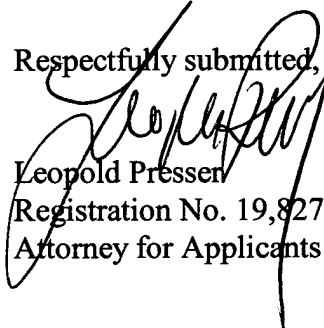
With regard to Mashburn, III, et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,962,984, this publication discloses voltage pulses, which are superimposed on a dc voltage component. However, these superimposed voltage pulses are merely utilized for the ignition of a lamp, having reference to Mashburn, III, et al., Column 2, lines 20-46, whereas during normal running operation, the lamp provided in Mashburn, III, et al. is only operated with a dc voltage, and not with a dc voltage having voltage pulses superimposed thereon.

Similarly, in Osterried, et al., the voltage pulses are only superimposed on a voltage in the concept of "ignition pulses", as in Column 3, lines 20-25, whereas during normal running operation, the lamp is operated merely with an alternating current voltage. Consequently, in the prior art there is no provision of applying voltage pulses which are superimposed on either dc voltages or ac voltages during the continuous running operation of a lamp, so as to eliminate any flickering of the lamp during various phases of brightness in lamp operation. To the contrary, neither in Mashburn, III, et al. nor in Osterried, et al. is there any superimposition of a sequence of repetitive voltage pulses onto the operating voltages during the running operation of the lamp. In both instances, the superimposed voltage pulses are only employed for the ignition phase, in effect, to provide for the "igniter 28" in Mashburn, III, et al., as well as "ignition pulses" in Osterried, et al.

Accordingly, inasmuch as during lamp operation neither of these patents are applicable to the invention as provided for in the amended claims, in which it is now clearly indicated that repetitive voltage pulses are superimposed upon the dc or ac voltages during the running operation of the lamp, the amended and new claims clearly and patentably distinguish over the art, and are directed to allowable and patentable subject matter.

Accordingly, in view of the foregoing comments and amendments, which are deemed to be fully responsive to the outstanding Office Action, the early and favorable reconsideration and allowance of the application by the Examiner is earnestly solicited. However, in the event that the Examiner has any queries concerning the instantly submitted Amendment, applicants' attorney respectfully requests that he be accorded the courtesy of possibly a telephone conference to discuss any matters in need of attention.

Respectfully submitted,


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